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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/015,583	12/17/2001	William R. Lehman	T3392-000000	5426

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EXAMINER

PHAM, MINH CHAU THI

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1724

DATE MAILED: 10/14/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/015,583

Applicant(s)

LEHMAN, WILLIAM R.

Examiner

Minh-Chau T. Pham

Art Unit

1724

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

Art Unit: 1724

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59).

Truhan teaches an air decontamination system comprising a sealed room (206) having an inlet (90), a vacuum unit (66) which creates a negative pressure within the room by suctioning air through the air inlet (90) into the room (206) and then from the room into an inlet (88) of the vacuum unit (66) wherein the vacuum unit creates a laminar flow of air within the room, and a filter unit (80) which filters air. The system has a work surface (200) disposed in the sealed area and air being suctioned downwardly through the work surface (see Fig. 4).

3. Claims 2-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as applied supra to paragraph 2, in view of Long et al (5,713,791; col. 2, lines 38-46 and lines 54-64; col. 3, lines 5-21 and lines 31-55).

Art Unit: 1724

Claims 2-6 call for the sealed room having a modular construction with removable walls and at least one transparent wall. Long et al disclose a clean room having a modular construction with removable walls and at least one transparent wall. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the sealed room of Truhan with modular construction with removable walls and at least one transparent wall as taught by Long et al to provide an effective mechanism to transport products between two separate clean room environments that would eliminate the requirements of a decontamination station for the products before they can be reintroduced into the second clean room environment.

4. Claims 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as applied supra to paragraph 2, and further in view of Renz (6,358,139; 9 in Fig. 1; col. 2, lines 21-25).

Claims 7-9 call for the an air lock room connected to the sealed room. Renz discloses an air lock room (9) connected to the sealed room wherein the air inlet extends between the sealed room and the air lock room and wherein the air suctioned through the air inlet resides within the air lock room, and another air inlet which allows air to pass from the outside source into the air lock room. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the sealed room of Truhan with an air lock room as taught by Renz

Art Unit: 1724

so that the fresh air flowing through the filter reaches directly the sealed room and eliminates most of the contaminants from the air stream.

5. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as applied supra to paragraph 2, and further in view of Chornenky et al (6,185,294 B1; col. 1, lines 39-45).

Claim 10 calls for an intercom system which allows a person outside to communicate with a person inside the room. Chornenky et al disclose intercom system which allows a person outside to communicate with a person inside the room. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to adopt the intercom system as taught by Chornenky et al in the sealed room of Truhan so that a person working inside the sealed room can communicate with others in the outside without having physically to go out of the sealed room and be contaminated.

6. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as applied supra to paragraph 2, and further in view of Hofstra et al (5,085,134; col. 6, lines 32-42).

Claim 11 calls for a warning device which provides an indication that the sealed room is in use. Hofstra et al disclose a warning device which provides an indication that the smoker's booth

Art Unit: 1724

is in use. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the sealed room of Truhan with a warning device as taught by Hofstra et al so that the device would detect the presence of a user and let others know that the sealed room is in use.

7. Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as applied supra to paragraph 2, in view of Kinhead et al (5,626,820; 14, 24, 46, 48 & 50 in Fig. 1A; col. 5, lines 15-26; col. 6, lines 9-17).

Claims 13 and 14 call for a multi-layered filtration system to remove various ranges of particle sizes and a chemical filter. Kinhead et al disclose a multi-layered filtration system of a clean room wherein the filtration system removes various ranges of particle sizes and a chemical filter. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to adopt the multi-layered filtration system as taught by Kinhead et al in the sealed room of Truhan since the filtration system removes not only the particles from the air stream but also the chemical contaminants produced by the processing station.

8. Claims 15-18, 24, 27, 29 and 33-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59).

Art Unit: 1724

Truhan discloses an air decontamination system comprising a sealed room having an inlet, a vacuum unit which creates a negative pressure within the room by suctioning air through the air inlet into the room and then from the room into an inlet of the vacuum unit wherein the vacuum unit creates a laminar flow of air within the room, and a filter unit which filters air entering the inlet of the vacuum unit, and a work station wherein laminar air is flowing downwardly from the top to bottom. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide an air decontamination sealed room as taught by Truhan for any application such as a mail processing area or a work station around the mail sorting apparatus since the sealed room provides a safe and dust free environment for the postal workers to work in.

9. Claims 19-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as applied supra to paragraph 8, and further in view of Long et al (5,713,791; col. 2, lines 38-46 and lines 54-64; col. 3, lines 5-21 and lines 31-55).

Claims 19-23 call for the sealed room having a modular construction with removable walls and at least one transparent wall. Long et al disclose a clean room having a modular construction with removable walls and at least one transparent wall. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the sealed room of Truhan with modular construction with removable walls and at least one transparent wall as

Art Unit: 1724

taught by Long et al to provide an effective mechanism to transport products between two separate clean room environments that would eliminate the requirements of a decontamination station for the products before they can be reintroduced into the second clean room environment.

10. Claims 30-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as applied supra to paragraph 8, and further in view of Renz (6,358,139; 9 in Fig. 1; col. 2, lines 21-25).

Claims 30-32 call for the an air lock room connected to the sealed room. Renz discloses an air lock room (9) connected to the sealed room wherein the air inlet extends between the sealed room and the air lock room and wherein the air suctioned through the air inlet resides within the air lock room, and another air inlet which allows air to pass from the outside source into the air lock room. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the sealed room of Truhan with an air lock room as taught by Renz so that the fresh air flowing through the filter reaches directly the sealed room and eliminates most of the contaminants from the air stream.

11. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as

Art Unit: 1724

applied supra to paragraph 8, and further in view of Chornenky et al (6,185,294 B1; col. 1, lines 39-45).

Claim 25 calls for an intercom system which allows a person outside to communicate with a person inside the room. Chornenky et al disclose intercom system which allows a person outside to communicate with a person inside the room. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to adopt the intercom system as taught by Chornenky et al in the sealed room of Truhan so that a person working inside the sealed room can communicate with others in the outside without having physically to go out of the sealed room and be contaminated.

12. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Truhan (3,776,121; 10, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 30 a-d in Fig. 2; 88, 90, 200, 204 & 206 in Fig. 4; 66, 80, 88 & 90 in Fig. 7; col. 2, lines 17-41 and lines 52-67; col. 3, lines 55-67; col. 4, lines 37-59), as applied supra to paragraph 8, and further in view of Hofstra et al (5,085,134; col. 6, lines 32-42).

Claim 26 calls for a warning device which provides an indication that the sealed room is in use. Hofstra et al disclose a warning device which provides an indication that the smoker's booth is in use. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the sealed room of Truhan with a warning device as taught by Hofstra et al so that the device would detect the presence of a user and let others know that the sealed room is in use.

Art Unit: 1724

13. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over as applied supra to paragraph 8, and further in view of Kinhead et al (5,626,820; 14, 24, 46, 48 & 50 in Fig. 1A; col. 5, lines 15-26; col. 6, lines 9-17).

Claim 28 calls for a multi-layered filtration system to remove various ranges of particle sizes and a chemical filter. Kinhead et al disclose a multi-layered filtration system of a clean room wherein the filtration system removes various ranges of particle sizes and a chemical filter. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to adopt the multi-layered filtration system as taught by Kinhead et al in the sealed room of Truhan since the filtration system removes not only the particles from the air stream but also the chemical contaminants produced by the processing station.

Response to Amendment

14. Applicant's arguments filed on July 25, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that none of the cited prior arts discloses "a work surface disposed in a sealed area and air being suctioned downwardly through the work surface". The Examiner now drops Dastoli et al and Thomas et al references and newly introduces Truhan as a primary reference for a 102(b) rejection of independent claims 1 and 12 to show an air decontamination system comprising a sealed room (206) having an inlet (90), a vacuum unit (66) which creates a negative pressure within the room by suctioning air through the air inlet (90) into the room (206)

Art Unit: 1724

and then from the room into an inlet (88) of the vacuum unit (66) wherein the vacuum unit creates a laminar flow of air within the room, and a filter unit (80) which filters air. The system has a work surface (200) disposed in the sealed area and air being suctioned downwardly through the work surface (see Fig. 4).

15. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-37 have been thoroughly considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejections as discussed above.

16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Minh-Chau Pham whose telephone number is (703) 308-1605. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (except Wednesday) from 7:15 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Blaine Copenheaver, can be reached on (703) 308-1261. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9310 (non-finals) or (703) 872-9311 (after-finals).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



Minh-Chau Pham

Patent Examiner

October 6, 2003